

METROPOLITAN MAYORS COALITION

a local initiative facilitated by METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

Please Support increasing Shannon Grant funding to \$10 million in the FY2018 budget

Since 2006, the Commonwealth has used the Senator Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Community Safety Initiative to combat youth violence, gang violence, and substance abuse through regional, multi-disciplinary efforts.

Communication across municipal lines and coordination between public safety officers and social service agencies is what sets Shannon Grants apart from other efforts to fund local law enforcement or prevention programs. No other program takes this concerted approach across jurisdictions and across disciplines.

Shannon Grant funds have been used to support regional law enforcement operations, to hire outreach workers, to fund job training programs, and to support after school programs in many cities and towns that are struggling with youth violence. Over 40 communities and more than 100 agencies have benefited from this program over the last ten years, and in that time regional coordination between law enforcement and social and human services agencies has increased substantially.

From a high of \$13 million in FY2009, the Shannon Grant was appropriated \$6 million in FY2017. We thank the legislature and the governor for their long-term support and respectfully request funding of \$10 million in the FY2018 budget.

Shannon sites across the state provide a wide range of activities to address youth gang violence within their communities. The activities encourage collaboration among agencies working with gang-involved and high-risk youth. Shannon CSI funds allow agencies to increase capacity, and in some cases sustain programs that may otherwise be eliminated. Activities include:

- Intervention-based programs for gang-involved youth that provide opportunities for these young people to connect with agencies offering GED courses, job training, substance abuse and mental health/trauma counseling, and re-entry services.
- Prevention-based programs for high-risk youth such as after-school tutoring, recreational programs that stay open later in the night, and outreach to truant youth and their families to get them back in school.
- Suppression-based programs for law enforcement agencies to add crime analysts that increase knowledge of where crime is likely to take place, for additional patrols in streets and neighborhoods with higher levels of violence, and for gang unit officers and detectives to investigate gang crimes and get guns and drugs off our streets.
- Increased community awareness through training community groups, schools, hospitals, and community partners to better understand and identify gangs and gang youth, and through steering committee meetings to better assess community resources and gaps in services to be addressed.

A portion of the many important activities funded by the support of the Shannon CSI in 2015 include:

Boston funded job training and placement for court-involved youth, analysis of gang and firearm violence to inform police strategy, re-entry support for individuals returning from incarceration, and out-of-school opportunities for siblings of gang members and youth who have been targets of gang recruitment.

Brockton funded outreach workers at alternative high school to refer youth to community programs, police and faith-based collaborative home visits to identified high-risk youth, and law enforcement directed patrols and warrant sweeps.

Fall River funded case management for court-involved youth, directed law enforcement patrols, community outreach and forums on youth violence prevention, mentoring, GED, and job training services.

Fitchburg funded crime analysis to inform police strategy and directed patrols, and collaborated with faith-based programs to connect youth in high-risk neighborhoods to out-of-school tutoring and recreational activities.

Haverhill funded directed patrols and information sharing meetings with neighboring police departments and collaborated with schools to offer anti-bullying and violence reduction trainings.

Holyoke funded out-of-school programs for high-risk youth within Holyoke and Chicopee, GED and job training for gang and court-involved youth, and directed law enforcement patrols.

Lawrence funded crime analysis to inform police strategy and directed patrols. Project partners addressed teen dating and violence, conflict resolution, and provided GED and job employment training.

Lowell funded analysis to inform directed law enforcement patrols and strategies, education & job placement opportunities for gang and high-risk youth, street outreach workers, liaisons to work with families of truant students, & health programs for at-risk and court-involved Southeast Asian youth.

Lynn funded case managers for youth reentering the community, street outreach workers, and support for gang investigations.

Metropolitan Mayors Coalition funded out-of school activities, HiSET and job placement opportunities of nine communities within greater Boston, and joint patrols and regular information sharing meetings with law enforcement agencies.

New Bedford funded street outreach workers, comprehensive wraparound services to at-risk and gang-involved youth in the community, a prosecutor focused on criminal gang cases, and re-entry support for individuals returning from incarceration.

Springfield funded crime analysis to inform police strategy, directed law enforcement patrols, street outreach workers, education and vocation opportunities, and GED and job training and placement services.

Taunton funded additional patrols to areas of increased youth violence, and worked with local clergy to connect youth to out-of-school programming.

Worcester funded GED and job training programs for gang-involved and high-risk youth. The Worcester Gang Unit, when not on duty, often supported prevention and intervention programs and activities such as the Boxing program and the YMCA.